

REMARKS

Status of Claims

Claims 1-21 were presented for examination. No claims have been added, amended, or canceled. Accordingly, claims 1-21 are presently pending.

Summary of the Office Action

The Examiner has identified six inventions, identified as Groups I-IV, which the Examiner considers to be patentably distinct. As a result, the Examiner has required the applicant to elect a single disclosed invention for prosecution on the merits.

The Inventions of Groups I and VI Are Related

The Examiner's election requirement is respectfully traversed. With regard to the inventions of Groups I and VI, applicant submits respectfully that the magneto-hydrodynamically-driven, fluidic network of the invention of Group I and the magnetohydrodynamic stirrer of Group VI are related and should be examined together. The network of Group I is recited as comprising a plurality of conduits each having at least one pair of electrodes disposed along the opposing walls thereof and at least one electrode controller. The stirrer of Group VI is related to the network of Group I by its similar recitation of a conduit and at least two electrodes positioned therein and at least one electrode controller.

Different embodiments of the stirrer of Group VI (recited in claims 17-19) further illuminate the relationship between the inventions of Groups I and VI. The electrodes of the network of Group I are "disposed along the opposing walls" of the

conduits. *See* Claim 1. The stirrer of Group VI was found by the Examiner to encompass a variety of embodiments including: (1) where a current or potential is applied between “an electrode positioned away from the walls of the conduit or chamber and at least two electrodes disposed along at least one wall” (claim 17); (2) where “the two electrodes disposed along at least one wall are disposed on the same wall” (claim 18); or (3) where “the two electrodes disposed along at least one wall are disposed on different walls” (claim 19).

In view of the variations in electrode positioning within the conduit found among the claimed stirrer embodiments of Group VI, the additional variation with regard to electrode positioning within a network of conduits of the network of Group I would not appear to impose any burden on the Examiner substantially greater than the burden imposed by examination of the claims of Group VI alone. As a result, applicant requests respectfully that the Examiner reconsider the restriction requirement and, upon reconsideration, include the claims of Group VI with the list of claims directed to the invention of Group I.

Election of Invention and Provisional Species Election

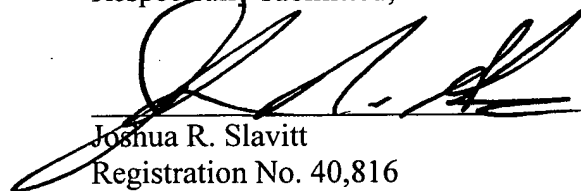
Notwithstanding the foregoing traversal, the applicant elects the invention of Group I and the species as recited in claim 4. Applicant notes that the claims identified in the Office Action as directed to the invention of Group I were listed as claims 2-5. *See* Office Action at 2. Based on a review of the claims, however, it would appear that claim 6 may have been inadvertently omitted from inclusion into the invention of Group I. Claim 6 is not identified in connection with any other invention listed in the Office

Action, and depends from claim 1 reciting only additional details of the conduits of claim 1. Accordingly, applicant submits that the claims which presently read on the invention of Group I are claims 1-6.

Conclusion

Applicant respectfully submits that the application is now in condition for allowance, and an early Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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